



Esther Polmanteer of Kalamazoo began experiencing vision loss a few years ago. She gave away her computer, assuming she'd never be able to use it again. When she started receiving training from MCB, she was happy to learn about computer software that reads text out loud. She went to a week-long Mini Adjustment Program, where, in her words, MCB staff "gave me the information I needed so I could adjust." Since then, she's purchased a new computer. She describes the training she's received from MCB as learning "how to do things in a different way." With her new skills, she goes shopping using public transportation, organizes recreational and entertainment activities for the residents of her building, and volunteers at a local preschool twice a month.

For more than 30 years, the Michigan Commission for the Blind has been changing lives by providing opportunities for people in Michigan who are blind or visually impaired to achieve independence and employment, and changing attitudes about what it means to be blind or visually impaired. For more information, call 1-800-292-4200 toll-free or visit www.michigan.gov/mcb.



Lula Lane of Detroit described herself as "in a low" a few years ago when she became legally blind and was dealing with major health problems that led to a kidney transplant. She was living with family members at the time, who were cooking for her and reading her mail to her. A couple months after attending a week-long MCB Mini Adjustment Training Program to learn skills of blindness for daily living, she moved to her own apartment. Now she does her own cooking and cleaning, and she reads her mail with a magnifying device provided by MCB. Said Ms. Lane, "I'm doing good in my own place—I do everything for myself. I'm just so uplifted."

Success Stories

Michigan Commission for the Blind 2008 Honor Roll Award Recipients



Dale Layer of St. Clair Shores is both deaf and blind, having experienced progressive hearing and vision loss. Previously, he had worked as a truck driver for many years, but he needed a new career to support his family. Over the course of his involvement with MCB, he received training in food service entrepreneurship through the Business Enterprise Program. He currently operates a vending machine route in the central part of the state, and has provided job shadowing opportunities to newcomers in the program.



Kim Munro of Lansing began to receive services from MCB in 2004 when she was a high school student. She attended the residential MCB Training Center in Kalamazoo, where she received training in skills of blindness and computers. During her search for employment, she volunteered at the Capital Area Center for Independent Living and Peckham Vocational Industries. She now works full-time at Peckham processing employee payroll and doing mailings. Munro also faces challenges as a wheelchair user, and she has encountered many barriers to employment—but not enough to stop her from achieving her goals.



Gamaliel Soto of Holland contacted MCB for assistance in finding employment. He went to the residential MCB Training Center in Kalamazoo to update his computer skills and skills of blindness. He says, "The training center is a wonderful place where people can learn and be encouraged." He now works for the local transportation system—scheduling rides for customers including those with disabilities—where his ability to speak both Spanish and English is a tremendous asset. Soto says, "I appreciate the chance to show my abilities and skills."